

Leesburg Standing Residential Traffic Committee Minutes of Monday, June 2, 2003

The Leesburg Standing Residential Traffic Committee met on Monday, June 2, 2003, in the Lower Level Conference Room of the Municipal Government Center, 25 West Market Street, Leesburg, Virginia. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Elizabeth Whiting, Chair

Ric Knight, Vice Chair

Mervin Jackson, Vice Mayor

Gabriella Kelemen

Peg Coleman

Rick Obaugh

Town Staff Present

Calvin Grow

Mark McCartney

Citizens present

Marty Martinez, Councilmember

Craig Lane

Kelly Young

VRTA Representative

Michael Socha

1. *Minutes:* On motion by Ric Knight, seconded by Gabe Kelemen, the Minutes of the May 5, 2003 meeting were unanimously approved as presented.
2. *Public Comment:* (a) Peg Coleman reported at Vice Mayor Jackson's request, that she had attended the Kincaid Forest HOA Board meeting and that Sandy Kane, past President of the HOA, felt that she could identify for the Committee exactly where enhanced pedestrian facilities should go. Peg Coleman recommended that the Committee set up the kind of inspection recently completed in the southwest quadrant, where representatives of the affected HOAs, activists and residents in the vicinity of proposed measures would have the chance to accompany staff and Committee members and explore the range of problems and solutions available. (b) Kelly Young, a Meade Drive resident expressed support for the traffic calming proposals planned in the southwest quadrant, but said that she felt the \$200.00 add-on penalty would be an effective deterrent to speeding. Liz Whiting noted that the Residential Traffic Task Force Report requires neighborhoods support for on-the-ground measures (beyond education and enforcement) and noted that the Town Attorney recommended that 75% community support be demonstrated before commencing the add-on penalty. The Committee suggested that Kelly Young approach the Woodlea HOA to sound them out on the proposal and get their reaction on what kind of grass roots support they would want to see before entertaining the proposal. Vice Mayor Jackson emphasized that Town Council members were impressed with the importance community members afforded an issue by the number of people who come to a Council meeting more than mere willingness to sign a neighbor's petition. (c) Liz Whiting reported that Councilman Martinez (who had to leave for a school function) asked the Committee to look into two matters, which she hoped could be staffed for the July meeting: (i) What can be done to accommodate pedestrians along Fort Evans Road from Market Street to the

cul de sac at the Montessori School while keeping them out of the travelway?
(ii) When will the Lawson Street bridge be closed to automobile traffic/when can the town expect the corresponding link of Battlefield Parkway to be constructed?

3. *VRTA Report:* Mike Socha reported that May use of Saf-T-Ride had reached approximately 1,600 trips and that VRTA planned by October 1, 2003, to eliminate the mid-day gap in coverage, with possible tweaking of the start and end times for the service. Mike Socha noted, using VRTA's contract with AOL as an example, that making shuttles look more like fixed route operations, operating within identified arrival times, tends to greatly increase usage. Ric Knight recommended that when setting up such "fixed" times, VRTA investigate when the shift changes take effect at the Outlet Mall and other locations where target riders work and aim to gear times to accommodate those schedules. In order to eliminate the mid-day break, Mike Socha identified cut-backs in the on-demand service as a source of funding. Ric Knight and Liz Whiting urged VRTA to approach this with caution and carefully identify alternatives, with the cost and rationale for each, before approaching the Town Council since the on-demand service is essential to a population already asked by life to bear considerable burdens.

Mike Socha also noted that the Saf-T-Ride bus will shortly be equipped with a bicycle rack capable of carrying two bicycles and easily used. Liz Whiting noted that the second annual letter to elementary and middle school PTO/PTAs was ready for release and thanked Mike Socha for the brochure copies for Saf-T-Ride that would be forwarded to each school to promote the service.

Mike Socha also reported that VRTA continued to pursue the bus shelters recommended for installation in the town. Calvin Grow reported that VDOT approval was awaited for the shelter installations and that a license agreement would be needed for the one shelter planned in street right-of-way. Since the Deputy Town Manager has been instrumental on processing VRTA matters, Calvin Grow will attempt to facilitate presentation and scheduling of these matters through Phil Rodenberg before he leaves at the end of June 2003 to become Fredericksburg city manager.

4. *North Street, N.W./Wirt Street, N.W. all-way stop request:* Vice Mayor Jackson and Calvin Grow reported that the Town Council had supported the Committee's recommendation for all-way stops at the intersection of Wirt Street, N.W. and North Street N.W., and that the signs had been installed before the end of last week.

Craig Lane questioned, with regard to the North Street, N.W. request and also in reference to Ms. Young's request, what area is incorporated in the "community" which must be canvassed to demonstrate support for an

installation. By reference, he noted that someone living at the far side of Meade Drive from the intersection with South King Street would be affected by traffic calming decisions; Craig Lane also noted that repeated speed studies that confirm speeding show what is actually being done and should form the basis for decisions, possibly, to raise speed limits, not lower them. Liz Whiting stated that, thus far, the determination of what “neighborhood” must be consulted has been made on a case-by-case basis, looking not just at the immediate vicinity of the proposed traffic calming measure, but also at what areas had no reasonably available alternatives to using the route under consideration. Liz Whiting also noted that it was the Residential Traffic Task Force’s conclusion, which has been endorsed by the Town Council adoption of the report and support of the Committee, that residential neighborhoods should not be forced to endure posted speeds higher than 25 mph because of the negative impacts on the quality of life, and that the fundamental undertaking of the Committee, which the members implicitly endorse by seeking membership, is to evaluate and propose measures that will tend to result in vehicle traffic speeds closing in on the posted 25 mph speed in order to enhance and protect the value of the town’s residential neighborhoods.

5. *FY’03 and ‘04 Budget project status:* Calvin Grow outlined the projects encompassed in the FY’04 budget approved by the Town Council.

Unfortunately, the funds for FY’03 can’t cover all of the projects the Committee hoped to put on the ground and Calvin Grow reviewed a handout detailing where the funds had gone and recommendations for how to apply the \$6,888.00 that has not yet been committed and is in peril of reverting to the general fund if not committed this fiscal year. The major problem is that the project designed for the vicinity of the South King Street/Fairfax Street intersection is much more costly than originally anticipated. (Even without the SRTC contribution to the By-Pass fencing project, the budget would be about \$9,000.00 short of constructing the improvements envisioned, and that without making provisions for the kind of landscaping viewed as critical to making these devices community amenities.)

Following discussion, Ric Knight moved, seconded by Calvin Grow, that if the FY’03 funds cannot be carried over and dedicated to SRTC purposes, that the balance of the funds be used to extend the fencing along the By-Pass where recommended by the staff to discourage pedestrian crossings. The motion was unanimously approved. The Committee’s feeling is that if the funds cannot be dedicated to our budget otherwise, that we should back this high-profile/high-priority project; however, if we can carry over the funds, our mission would be better promoted by the opportunity for more reflection on where they should go.

6. *Crosswalk at Oakcrest Manor Drive and Catoclin Circle:* Calvin Grow reported that residents in that area were concerned that school children were

crossing at that location and then using a paved path through the townhouse area to walk to school and asked the town to install a crosswalk. Calvin Grow noted that school officials don't want to encourage that route and oppose the crosswalk. The Committee carried the matter over to the next meeting to allow the residents to attend and address the matter.

7. *All-way stops at Ayrlee Avenue intersections with Fairview Street and Morven Park Road:* Calvin Grow stated that these requests were forwarded by Councilwoman Melinda Kramer. The concern is that parents dropping off and picking up children at Loudoun Country Day School are speeding and using Ayrlee Avenue as a cut-through. [Note that residential cut-through policy would not appear to apply, since the problem destination is at the end of the street in question. Also, it's hard to say that Ayrlee is more residential than Fairview.] Calvin Grow related that speed studies done in January showed an average speed on Morven Park Road of 24 mph and northbound on Fairview of 25 mph. Liz Whiting questioned the results, asking how the groupings showing the bulk of vehicles at 25 mph or faster could then get averaged as low as 24 mph. Calvin Grow indicated that it was appropriate to take another look at those results to make sure they had been interpreted correctly and the Committee agreed that the matter should be carried over to the next meeting. At Ric Knight's suggestion, the Committee asked that new studies be done at each location. Liz Whiting and Ric Knight asked that Calvin Grow let Ms. Kramer know that the Committee had deferred the matter in order to get more recent results and that if she had any other specific concerns regarding these locations, to please contact Ric Knight.
8. *Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Master Plan:* Peg Coleman reported that the plan would be before the Loudoun County Planning Commission for a public hearing June 18, 2003 and urged the members to support the plan as forwarding the Committee's mission.
9. *East Market Street improvements:* Calvin Grow noted that the extent of required marking of lane improvements would result in the SRTC recommendations for textured pavement being largely obscured. The Committee regretted that the textured pavement couldn't be incorporated and also expressed concern that no pedestrian crossings were planned between Catoctin Circle and Harrison Street, since people cross at Mom's Apple Pies and also in the vicinity of McDonalds. However, the Committee was pleased by the design of the pedestrian improvements planned at the intersection of East Market Street and Catoctin Circle.
10. *Staff report regarding Southwest Quadrant review:* Calvin Grow reported that the following proposals were evaluated following the southwest quadrant walk/drive through, with the following results/status/recommendations:

Meade Drive at Fairfield Way: Moved stop sign closer to Meade Drive and marked stop bar to evaluate textured circle or median in the intersection.

Meade Drive at Deer Meadow Place: Evaluate for location of stop sign and stop bar.

Enforcement at Hague Drive: Forwarded request to Police Department.

Speeding between Fairfield Way and Lawnhill Court on Meade Drive: Get new speed studies.

201/204 Country Club Drive: Evaluate for pedestrian signs and textured cross walks.

Country Club Drive between Governors Drive and Rollins Drive: Evaluate for textured median.

Country Club Drive at golf cart crossing: Reinstalled pedestrian crossing warning sign.

Woodlea pool area: Evaluate for textured pavement and crosswalk; HOA to look into trimming trees on uphill side of entrance.

Hague Drive at Meade Drive bus stop: Install H.C. ramp and textured crosswalk if possible.

11. *Committee member concerns:* (a) Ric Knight noted that the new trail construction in the vicinity of Fairview Street was covered with mud and needed to be cleaned up. (b) The Committee asked Peg Coleman to alert Ms. Young to check back with SRTC before launching any petition process, so that it would approve the wording of any petition, identify the sections of Meade Drive that can qualify as “residential districts” for purposes of \$200.00 add-on and help identify the areas that should be canvassed.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m. The next meeting is Monday, June 30, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. Staff is to contact Liz Whiting if anything arises needing Committee consideration in the interim.